

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-17 are pending. Claims 2 and 7 are amended.

Appreciation is expressed to Examiner Gates for acknowledging that Claims 16 and 17 recite patentably distinguishing subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1 and 7 are independently allowable for the reasons set forth below.

The present application pertains to a method and device for clamping rotationally symmetrical bodies. An exemplary device of Figs. 6 and 7 includes a tie rod 64 which provides a tensile force F_1 along the rotation axis 19 of a body 10, and a supporting element 72 which provides a spring force F_2 to the body 10 counteracting the tensile force. However, the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Morawski et al. (US 4,540,187).

Claim 1 recites a method of clamping a rotationally symmetrical body which includes, among other aspects, pulling the body, with its first side, by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the body on the first side of the body, against a supporting element having a centering effect, wherein the supporting element is acted upon with a spring force which is opposed to the tensile force, the spring force is slightly smaller than the tensile force and is proportioned in such a way that, when the body strikes the supporting element, the supporting element yields in the axial direction.

Morawski discloses a collet chuck for tapered workpieces W including spring-biased slides 60 and 62, a stop ring 102, and a puller shaft 22 on which is mounted a collet sleeve 38 having fingers 44 which cooperate with a bushing 50. As discussed in column 2, lines 38-68 of Morawski, the workpiece is first moved rearward against the stop ring, during which the slides 60 and 62 cooperate to center the workpiece W. Then, as discussed in column 3, lines 1-12 of Morawski, the puller shaft 22 is retracted which causes the fingers 44 to move rearward and outward over the bushing 50 so as to clamp the workpiece W between the fingers 44 and the stop ring 102.

In paragraph 11 of the rejection, the Examiner states that the puller shaft 22 applies "a tensile force to screw 36, said force being transmitted to the body through fingers 44." Though Applicants disagree, the language of Claim 1, clarified herein, distinguishes the claimed method over the disclosure in Morawski.

Claim 1 recites pulling the body, with its first side, by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the body. As illustrated in Fig. 1 of Morawski, the fingers 44 clamp the workpiece W at locations remote from the rotation axis of the workpiece W. Clearly, neither the puller shaft 22 nor the fingers 44 apply a tensile force along the rotation axis of the workpiece W. Thus, Morawski does not disclose a method of clamping a rotationally symmetrical body which includes pulling the body, with its first side, by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the body, in combination with the other aspects recited in Claim 1.

Claim 1 is therefore allowable over Morawski, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 is also rejected as being anticipated by Morawski.

Claim 7 recites a device for clamping a rotationally symmetrical body including, among other features, a tie rod which is mounted in the device in such a way that it can act on the body axially, a tensile force of the tie rod being adjustable, and having a supporting element, against which the rotationally symmetrical body to be clamped can be pulled by the tie rod, wherein the supporting element is supported in a spring-loaded manner on a stop of the device in such a way that it is movable in the axial direction of the body to be clamped, the spring force counteracting the tensile force.

In paragraph 11 of the rejection, the Examiner states that "the body is pulled by the tie-rod through contact with the fingers." Though Applicants disagree, Claim 7 clearly distinguishes the claimed device at issue here over the disclosure in Morawski.

Specifically, Claim 7 recites that the tie rod is mounted in the device in such a way that it can pull the body, to be clamped during clamping, by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the body. As illustrated in Fig. 1 of Morawski, the fingers 44 clamp the workpiece W at locations remote from the rotation axis of the workpiece W. Clearly, neither the puller shaft 22 nor the fingers 44 can pull the workpiece W by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the workpiece W. Thus, Morawski does not disclose a device for clamping a rotationally symmetrical body which includes a tie rod mounted in the device in such a way that it can pull the body, to be clamped during clamping, by a tensile force applied along the rotation axis of the body, in combination with the other features recited in Claim 7.

Claim 7 is therefore also allowable over Morawski, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 7 is also respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in the dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: June 3, 2009

By: Peter T. DeVore
Patrick C. Keane
Registration No. 32,858

Peter T. DeVore
Registration No. 60,361

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
703 836 6620